



 Claremont Graduate University

# Big Pitch Strategies

**Marcus Weakley, Ph.D.**

Director, Center for Writing & Rhetoric

# Today's Goals

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- Give concrete strategies for meeting the unique demands of the Big Pitch presentation: general audience, 3-minute limit, & 1 PowerPoint slide.
- Begin initial brainstorming and planning on a pitch by reviewing:
  1. The Bigger Picture
  2. Curiosity
  3. Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples
  4. Easily-Accessible Structure

# The Bigger Picture Through Significance

# Why What You Do Matters For Them

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Bring the audience into your world by connecting to something meaningful in theirs.



When we get really involved in a topic, it sometimes becomes harder to take a bird's eye view and see the bigger picture.



Doing this, though, clearly conveys why the audience should care about your topic, how it relates to them, and what it means compared to other similar topics.

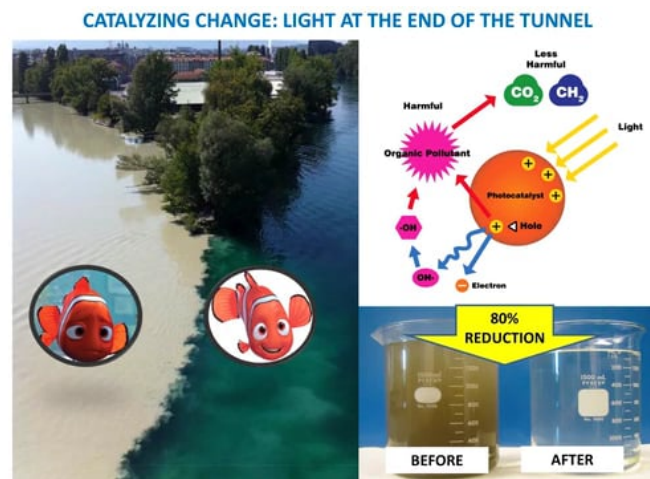


Conveying significance is a vital step in addressing a general audience.



## Example of Bigger Picture Significance

- He uses an image of a clean and dirty river to help demonstrate the broader significance of his work.
- He begins and ends with very engaging elements (humor & then hope) that makes an emotional connection with the audience.
- The audience leaves the presentation with a feeling of hope.



# Significance Brainstorm

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- Topic: I am studying ...  
(Convey this as concisely as you can at this point)
- Question: because I want to find out what/why/how ...
- Significance (pure): in order to help my audience *understand* ...
- Significance (applied): in order to be able to (*do something differently*)\* ...

\*Not all projects have applied significance in that they aim to change something in the world apart from changing our understanding about something in it. However, for a presentation to a general audience, applied significance goes a long way. So, if you don't think your project has applied significance, try and see if there's something there that you haven't considered yet.

# Audience Curiosity

# The Audience Doesn't Know What You Know

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Getting very involved in a topic often causes us to lose track of what might be interesting about it to an audience that is encountering it for the first time.



Put yourself behind the eyes of someone who has never encountered the details of your topic before—see it as if you were encountering it for the first time again.



Convey that feeling and awe to your audience.

## Example of Using Curiosity for Effect

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- Complex, semi-familiar material presented simply with clear explanations.
- Makes a complex yet highly relevant topic interesting by engaging audience's general understanding and taking that to a deeper level.



# Unexpected Element Brainstorm

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- Take a moment and imagine you are an audience member encountering your topic for the first time.
- Then, brainstorm **at least 4** interesting facts about your project, research, or art that such an audience would not know without you highlighting it in your presentation.
- Share these points with someone who does not know about your topic. When you discuss it, pay attention to how you explain it—either record it or take notes. Often, we explain things in conversations with others in inspired ways that are easy to forget unless we keep track of them.
- Use that feedback to rule out some points and keep others. You probably won't have time to use all 4 in your pitch.

# Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples



## Do a Lot With a Little Bit of Information

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You can convey a lot of information by comparing something unknown to the audience with something they know.



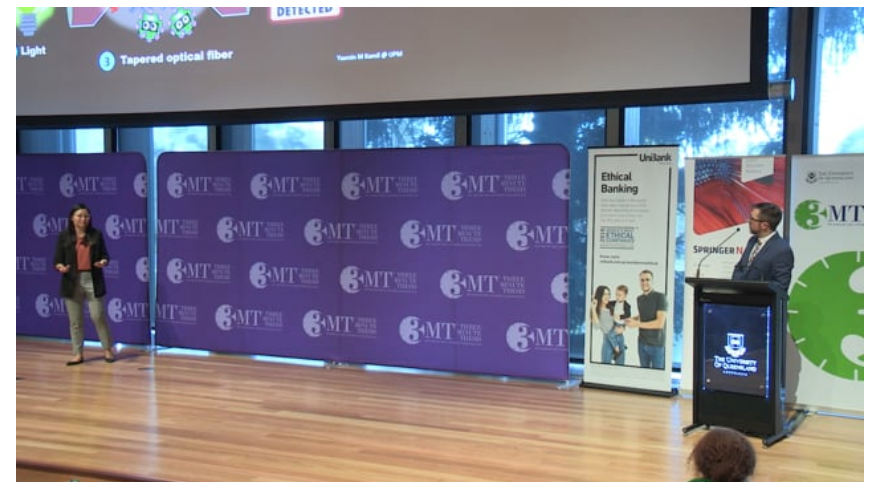
Use this for parts of your presentation or for your presentation as a whole.



For examples, see some of the sample videos on the website (Finding Nemo, underwater aquarium).

# Example of Using Analogies, Metaphors, & Examples

- Her complex test is compared to an underwater aquarium (1:50).
- Her statistics also almost always are accompanied by references that make their impact stronger (0:25).
- Also, she brainstormed a fun name for her work (Dengue Detective).
- She creates a hook by asking a question the audience will say "yes" to.



# Concision Brainstorm

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- Think of a metaphor or analogy that can make your work concrete.
- You can convey a lot of information by comparing something unknown to the audience with something they know.
- Use this for parts of your presentation or for your presentation as a whole.
- For examples, see some of the sample videos on the website (Finding Nemo, underwater aquarium).
- Brainstorm examples for every key concept you discuss in your presentation. You may not have time to use them all, but it's better to edit them out rather than not have them at all.

# Clear & Fluid Structure

# Create a Story or Use Themes to Engage

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Typical academic written structures will not engage a general audience well enough within the limitations of a 3-minute time limit and single PowerPoint slide.



Instead, you will need to develop a clear and familiar structure for the presentation based on either narrative or theme.



Try structuring your talk narratively. Who are the characters? What is the beginning, the middle, and the end? What's the crisis, change, or call to action?



Be sure to include a hook to get the audience's attention and convey significance (a surprising fact, powerful example, or analogy).



For the ending, be sure you tie up the presentation and ensure things have come full circle.

## Example of Intentional Structure

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# Audience Emotion



# Example of Imbuing Emotion into a Pitch

- Creates some emotion by using incredible statistics to convey significance.
- Strongest emotion by use of specific example: Daniel Summers, PTSD & suicide.
- Used direct quote from example for most effect.



# Structure & Emotion Brainstorm

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- Sketch out a general narrative structure to your pitch:
  - Beginning ...
  - Middle ...
  - End ...
- Can you integrate mystery or sadness into your presentation?  
How?
- What other emotions could you possibly integrate into your presentation?
- Any opportunities for humor?

# In Summary

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## What to Do

- Have a clear structure
- Include story, metaphor, or emotional element
- Gives concrete examples
- Tells the audience unexpected things
- Use significance!
- Anything else?

## What Not to Do

- Too technical
- Lack of clear structure
- Too simple
- Tries to say too much
- Anything else?



Contact Us!

[3mt@cgu.edu](mailto:3mt@cgu.edu)

[www.cgu.edu/thebigpitch](http://www.cgu.edu/thebigpitch)

# The Feynman Technique (to simplify complex ideas)

